

PART ONE:

Mandatory Boating Education and Certification



Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO)



Safe Boating Certificate (SBC)

SAFE BOATING

To legally operate any boat with an engine or motor, other than a personal watercraft, or a sailboat 19½ feet in length or longer, the following persons must obtain a **Safe Boating Certificate** or a **Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation**:

- Residents of Connecticut
- Owners of real property in Connecticut
- Anyone using Connecticut waters more than 60 days in a year.

A person who has a valid vessel operator license by the United States Coast Guard does not require a Safe Boating Certificate. They must have a copy of the license on board the recreational vessel on which they are operating.

To legally operate of a personal watercraft, regardless of state residency, you must possess a **Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation** to operate on Connecticut waters.

The Connecticut Safe Boating Certificate and Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation are accepted in many states. Connecticut recognizes certificates from New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island for use upon our waters (see page 12, Reciprocity).

Safe Boating Certificate or Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation

A **Safe Boating Certificate (SBC)** is a white, wallet-sized, plastic card with blue lettering. This certificate will allow an individual to operate any recreational vessel, except a personal watercraft (see page 43, Definitions of Terms), on Connecticut's waters.

A **Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO)** is a white, wallet-sized, plastic card with red or pink lettering. This certificate will allow an individual to operate any recreational vessel including a personal watercraft. No person shall operate a personal watercraft on Connecticut's waters, regardless of residency, unless she/he has been issued and possesses a CPWO (see page 45, Age Restrictions).

Any person obtaining a **Safe Boating Certificate (SBC)** or a **Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO)** needs to have the certificate on board at all times while operating a vessel. A certificate is valid for the life of the person to whom it is issued and may be issued regardless of age. A person may not have more than one certificate. (i.e. one for the boat, one for the personal watercraft, etc.) (See page 45, Age Restrictions for operating boats with engines greater than 10 horsepower and personal watercraft.) The certificate may be suspended upon conviction of operating under the influence of alcohol or drugs (see page 50, BUI).

Requirements for a Safe Boating Certificate

In order to meet the requirements for a **Safe Boating Certificate (SBC)**, an individual must:

- Pass an approved basic boating course *or*
- Pass the DEP's Equivalency Examination

Note: You must save the diploma from the course/exam. You will need it to apply for a Safe Boating Certificate. Connecticut does not accept diplomas from on-line courses.

Requirements for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft (CPWO)

In order to meet the requirements for a **Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO)**, an individual must:

- Pass an approved combination basic boating/personal watercraft course *or*
- Pass an approved basic boating course and an approved 2½ hour personal watercraft course *or*
- Pass the DEP's Equivalency Examination.

NOTE: You must save the diplomas from the course(s)/exam. You will need them to apply for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation. If you are upgrading from your Safe Boating Certificate to a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation, you are required to surrender your Safe Boating Certificate.

DEP Processing Offices

DEP Licensing & Revenue, 79 Elm St., Hartford, CT 06106-5127
(860) 424-3105 M–F, 9 –4 pm

DEP Marine Headquarters, 333 Ferry Rd., Old Lyme, CT 06371
(860) 434-8638 M–F, 8–4 pm

Westport Office, Sherwood Island State Park, Westport, CT 06880
(203) 226-3116 M–F, 8–1:00 pm and 1:30–4 pm;
Nov. 1–Feb. 1, open only Tuesday and Thursday from 8–1:00 pm and 1:30–4 pm

Western District Headquarters, 230 Plymouth Rd., Harwinton, CT 06791
(Western District: certificates processed Monday, Thursday and Friday)
(860) 485-0226 8:30–4 pm (call after Oct. 1 for winter hours)

Eastern District Headquarters, 209 Hebron Rd., Marlborough, CT 06447
(Eastern District: certificates processed Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday) (860) 295-9523 8:30–4 pm

Obtaining a Boating Certificate (SBC or CPWO)

Where do I apply? Applications for a Safe Boating Certificate (SBC) or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation (CPWO) are available at DEP Processing Offices, or at a city/town clerk's office or you can request an application on the DEP website or by calling the DEP Boating Division. If applying in person, applications are processed only at DEP Processing Offices. Applications can be mailed only to Hartford and Old Lyme offices to be processed.

What do I bring? In order to obtain a SBC or CPWO, you must submit the orange application for a SBC or the pink application for a CPWO, along with the appropriate diploma(s), and a \$25.00 fee. The application must be notarized if mailed or if brought in by someone other than the applicant. If you are applying in person, you do not need to have the application notarized, but you will need a picture ID.

Equivalency Examination

The DEP's **Equivalency Examination** is a 50-question multiple choice test that is designed for the experienced boater to qualify for a **Safe Boating Certificate** or a **Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation**. The DEP recommends, however, that all boaters take a class to ensure they are up-to-date with current boating laws.

How do I apply? Examinations are offered only by the DEP. Applications to register for the examination are available on the DEP website or by calling the DEP Boating Division. The examination fee is \$25.00 for any person taking the examination for the first time and is \$10.00 for each time thereafter.

Limited Durational Certificates

Upon request, a **Limited Durational Certificate** may be issued after an application for the Safe Boating Certificate or Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation has been received by the DEP. The certificate is valid for 60 days from the date of issue or until the permanent certificate arrives. It allows you to operate while waiting for your plastic certificate.

Where do I apply? Apply in person at any of the DEP Processing Offices. Applications by mail will only be accepted by the Old Lyme office.

What do I bring? In order to request a limited durational certificate, you must submit a completed application, along with the appropriate diploma(s) and a \$25.00 fee. A photo ID is needed, if requesting a limited durational certificate in person.

Duplicate Certificate

Any person who has been issued a Safe Boating Certificate or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation may apply for a **Duplicate Certificate** if the original certificate was lost, stolen, destroyed, or the individual has changed his/her legal name.

Where do I apply? Applications are available at DEP Processing Offices or you can request an application on the DEP website or by calling the DEP Boating Division.

What do I bring? The duplicate certificate fee is \$10.00. There is no charge for a name change due to marriage or divorce. You need to supply a copy of the marriage/divorce papers.

Temporary Certificate

If you purchase and register a new or used boat other than a personal watercraft in your name, and do not have a Safe Boating Certificate, you may apply for a **Temporary Safe Boating Certificate**. It is valid for **3** months **from the date of vessel registration**. Within that time, you must qualify for and obtain a permanent Safe Boating Certificate.

If you purchase and register a new or used personal watercraft in your name and do not qualify for a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation, you may apply for a **Temporary Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation** after you have taken an approved 2½ hour personal watercraft course. The temporary certificate is valid for **3** months **from the date of vessel registration**. Within that time, you must qualify for and obtain a permanent Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

Where do I apply? Apply in person at any DEP Processing Office.

What do I bring? For the **Temporary Safe Boating Certificate** bring your original registration (in your name because the Temporary Certificate is issued to the person whose name is on the registration), a photo ID and a \$25.00 fee. For the **Temporary Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation**, you additionally need proof of successful completion of an **approved 2½ hour personal watercraft course**.

NOTE: No person shall be issued more than one Temporary Certificate during his or her lifetime.

Reciprocity

The Connecticut Safe Boating Certificate and the Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation are accepted in many states. Connecticut recognizes certificates from **New York, Massachusetts and Rhode Island** for use upon our waters. Adherence to Connecticut state law remains the responsibility of the boater.

In addition, any person who possesses a Safe Boating Certificate or a Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation issued by a state having an agreement of reciprocity with the Commissioner of Environmental Protection may present evidence of the certificate to satisfy the educational requirements for the issuance of a Connecticut Safe Boating Certificate or Certificate of Personal Watercraft Operation.

Approved Boating Courses

You will notice that there are **three** types of basic boating courses that are offered throughout the state:

1. **Combined basic boating and personal watercraft class.**
This 8-hour class qualifies you for a CPWO or SBC.
2. **Basic boating class.** This 8-hour class qualifies for SBC only.
3. **Personal watercraft course.** This 2½-hour class along with the basic boating class, qualify you for a CPWO. By itself, the class may qualify you for a temporary CPWO.

One-day classes, for a fee, are available statewide by private providers. There are a number of approved out-of-state basic boating courses that may qualify you for an SBC or CPWO. Call the Boating Division at (860) 434-8638 for details.

Most Community Colleges in Connecticut are now offering the DEP eight-hour combined basic boating and personal watercraft course. For information concerning the date and time of the classes, you should contact the colleges noted below or visit our website for a class nearest you. The DEP, the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary, and the United States Power Squadrons course lists are available through the DEP website: www.ct.gov/dep.

COMMUNITY COLLEGE	LOCATION	TELEPHONE
Asnuntuck College	Enfield	(860) 253-3034
Capital Community College	Hartford	(860) 906-5136
Gateway College	No. Haven	(203) 285-2080
Housatonic College	Bridgeport	(203) 332-5051
Manchester Community College	Manchester	(860) 512-3232
Middlesex Community College	Middletown	(860) 343-6620
Naugatuck Valley College	Waterbury	(203) 575-8029
Northwestern CT. College	Winsted	(860) 738-6444
Norwalk College	Norwalk	(203) 857-7080
Quinebaug Valley College	Danielson	(860) 774-1133
Three Rivers College	Norwich	(860) 885-2607
Tunxis College	Farmington	(860) 255-3666